

Muharraq City: A GIS-based Planning Strategy for its Ancient Heritage Conservation

The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the
degree of
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By

Abdulla Mohamed Ghanem Mohamed AISulaiti

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Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

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List of Publications

Sulaiti, A, 2010, Shaikh salman house (MHQ277) Archaeological Report (Unpublished)

Bu Maher Fort, 2010, Interim Archaeological Report on Excavations, February-March 2010 for The Ministry of Culture and Information, Bahrain.

Management Plan for the Testimony of the Pearling Economy. Ministry of Culture and Information.

Al-Sulaiti, A, 2011, A view of the defence strategy of Mu'Harraq, a tribal town in the Gulf. Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, V 41, p 1–16.

Abstract

This thesis provides a spatial analytical approach towards protecting the heritage of the town of Muharraq from the influence of development. It advances several recommendations to protect the heritage from further loss or deterioration, and it suggests possible measures to improve the existing situation while preserving growth and heritage.

The term “heritage” used in this study encompasses not just the heritage landmarks, but also the ‘urban fabric’, including the buildings and neighbourhoods established by generations of Bahraini people, which have been ignored in the past as elements of cultural heritage. The town of Muharraq represents an Islamic town in terms of overall urban fabric, utilization of urban space, and organization of tribes and buildings. Muharraq is the only town in the region which still preserves most of these heritage elements, whereas most of the other towns have lost their heritage completely to extensive modernization.

The relevance of this thesis stems from a lack of research in the towns of Bahrain despite their historical significance in the region. The government also realized the heritage significance of the town, which prompted it to begin working toward finding ways to preserve this heritage with sustainable growth.

This study has demonstrated the immense potential of spatial and analytical techniques compared to the conventional methods, and it provided a different insight into the history and physical characteristics of the town, hitherto unknown. The thematic mapping and analysis fosters a better appreciation of the historical situation, spatial and temporal variations, identification and quantification of lost heritage, or its degree of loss. The study also suggested methods for improving the outcomes of such analytical methods by improving data quality and refining the analysis, which would significantly improve decision making towards protecting the heritage.

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